



## Roanoke, VA – NC Line

### TIMELINE

**Dec. 18, 1991** - U.S. Congress identifies I-73 as a high priority corridor in the new federal transportation bill - ISTEA. Lists route as Detroit, MI to Charleston, SC.

**Jan 26 - Feb 3, 1994** - VDOT holds Citizen Information meetings in SW Virginia to determine corridor through Virginia.

**March 14 - 15, 1994** - Congressional Subcommittee holds hearings in Washington on the routing of I-73 through Virginia. All other I-73 states and I-73/I-74 Corridor Association argue against the indirect 460/220 dogleg. Senator Warner testifies that he supports the dogleg, partly because of access to the Roanoke Regional Airport.

**March 17, 1994** – Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) selects Alternative 6A as the corridor for I-73 through Virginia. Alternative 6A roughly followed Rt. 460 from WV line to Blacksburg to Smart Road to I-81/I-581 to Roanoke to Rt. 220 to Martinsville to NC line.

**Nov. 28, 1995** - President Clinton signs the National Highway System Designation Act of 1995 into law. This lists I-73 as generally following I-581 in Roanoke to US 220 to NC Line. Moved northern terminus from Detroit to Sault Ste. Marie, MI.

**In 1995** - West Virginia decides not to build I-73 to interstate standards.

**In 1997** – VDOT begins I-73 location study.

**In 1998** - South Carolina moves I-73 terminus from Charleston to Myrtle Beach.

**June 09, 1998** - Congress reauthorizes the federal transportation bill as TEA-21. I-73 earmarks for Fiscal Years 1998-2003 included: \$6 million for construction of I-73 from Roanoke to the NC line and two line items totaling \$4 million to conduct Preliminary Engineering on I-73 from Roanoke to the NC line. In addition to this allocated federal money, Virginia kicked in an additional 25 percent to cover its required match. The U.S. and Virginia I-73 earmarks totaled approximately \$12.5 million for FY '98-'03.

**April 26, 1999** - I-73 Roanoke to NC Line listed as one of the 50 most wasteful projects by Taxpayers for Common Sense and Friends of the Earth in their *Road to Ruin* report.

**In 2000** – Efforts by the citizens group Riverland Alert Neighbors gain National Historic District eligibility status for Riverland Road area in SE Roanoke. VDOT must route I-73 away from this community.

**In 2000** - Ohio decides not to construct I-73 saying traffic volume does not justify new interstate.

**Nov. 1, 2000** - VDOT/FHWA release Draft Environmental Impact Statement for public comment.

**Dec. 11 - 14, 2000** - VDOT holds Location Public Hearings in Roanoke, Franklin and Henry counties as part of DEIS public comment period.

**Jan. 12, 2001** - Public comment period closes for DEIS.

**May 17, 2001** - CTB chooses location route for I-73 from Roanoke to NC Line. The roughly 68 mile alignment would traverse SE Roanoke, Coopers Cove, an Old Order German Baptist Community in Franklin County, and critical habitat for the endangered Roanoke logperch. The CTB also approved a Connector route from US 220 to I-73 through Crowell Gap.

**June 2001** - CTB adjusts route to avoid wetlands in Henry County/southern Franklin County. This change puts a bypass around the bypass which is already around Martinsville.

**June 2001** - Michigan decides not to construct I-73 saying money is better spent on existing roads.

**Nov. 14, 2002** – Efforts by citizen group Virginians for Appropriate Roads (VAR) obtain Historic eligibility status for portion of SE Roanoke. VDOT must route I-73 away from this community.

**April 2003** - Roanoke area politicians including City Councilmen, State Delegates and State Senators push to re-route I-73 away from SE Roanoke. Several voiced approval of upgrading US 220 instead of constructing a new terrain I-73.

**May 14, 2003** - VDOT announced in its Six Year Plan that \$7.36 million will be diverted from I-73 funding to US 220 upgrades. This funding was for I-73 construction but I-73 is still in Preliminary Engineering stage.

**Sept. 22, 2003** - Keeper of the National Register reaffirms Historic eligibility for SE Roanoke after VDOT/FHWA appealed original decision.

**June 02, 2004** - For the second time, I-73 Roanoke to NC Line is listed as one of the 50 most wasteful projects by Taxpayers for Common Sense and Friends of the Earth in their *Road to Ruin* report. This report is released about every 5 years.

**June 02, 2004** - VDOT holds Citizen Information meeting to discuss latest alignment adjustment. To avoid SE Roanoke, this adjustment routed I-73 through the Clearbrook community in Roanoke County, along existing US 220.

**July 15, 2004** – CTB approves latest alignment for I-73 which moves location in the City of Roanoke to avoid impacts to historic resources. These impacts were brought to light because of VAR's research efforts.

**Aug. 10, 2005** - President Bush signs federal transportation bill reauthorized as SAFETEA-LU. Includes earmarks for \$2.2 million for Preliminary Engineering in Roanoke County and \$7.6 million for construction in Henry County.

**Feb. 6, 2006** - South Carolina Governor signs bill allowing tolls to be collected on SC I-73 once constructed. The 90 miles in SC is estimated to cost \$2 billion.

**November 30, 2006** – FHWA approves FEIS for Roanoke, VA – NC Line.

**March 30, 2007** – FHWA issues R.O.D. for I-73 Roanoke, VA to NC State Line section.

**October 2007** – VAR files federal lawsuit against FHWA, USDOT, VDOT to stop further development of I-73.

**November 2007** - Henry County Board of Supervisors pass resolution to request CTB shift the alignment in Henry County.

**June 19, 2008** – CTB passes resolution directing VDOT to evaluate the Henry County re-alignment.

**July 20, 2009** - US. District Court Judge James C. Turk issued a decision dismissing the lawsuit Virginians For Appropriate Roads, et al v. J. Richard Capka, et al, which was filed in October 2007.

**July 28, 2009** – VAR appealed the July 20 decision.

**Dec. 17, 2009** – CTB directs VDOT to work with FHWA to complete necessary steps to shift alignment in Henry County.

**January 25, 2010** - Appeal of the lawsuit Virginians For Appropriate Roads, et al v. J. Richard Capka, et al was settled out of court. VAR reserved the right to challenge some issues if a Supplemental EIS is completed on the I-73 project.

**February 15, 2011** – Environmental Assessment for the Henry County re-alignment was released.

**June 15, 2011** - CTB passed a resolution to pursue shifting the alignment of Interstate 73 in Henry County from the approved location corridor to the Henry County Alternative. The alignment extends approximately 21 miles from Route 890/108 to Route 87 and would move Interstate 73 to the west, closer to the City of Martinsville.

**June 17, 2011** – CTB passes annual Six-Year Plan. This Six-Year Plan is for Fiscal Years 2012-2017. The only mentions of I-73 in the Six-Year Plan for FY2012-17 are the two sections that were earmarked in the 2005 federal highway bill. There are no future allocations for these six years. Previous allocations have been for Preliminary Engineering only and those allocations have not fully funded the PE portion of I-73. The Roanoke County section PE is estimated to cost \$41.2 million. Of that, only \$2.4 million has been previously allocated, leaving \$38.7 million unfunded with no future allocations in sight. The Martinsville/Henry County section PE is estimated to cost \$21.5 million. Of that, only 8.5 million has been previously allocated, leaving \$12.9 million unfunded with no future allocations in sight.

**July 2011** – A Michigan Dept. of Transportation reaffirms their 2001 decision not to pursue I-73 in Michigan saying nothing has changed.

**January 10, 2012** – House Bill 575 was filed in Virginia General Assembly. This bill was to create a Salem Highway Construction District Transportation Revenue Fund for interstate construction and maintenance. 50 percent for I-73 and 50 percent for I-81. The bill was referred to the Appropriations Committee.

**February 20, 2012** - House Bill 575 was left in the Appropriations Committee with no action during the Virginia General Assembly session.

**June 20, 2012** – VDOT approves Six-Year Plan for Fiscal Years 2013-18. The plan contains no future allocations for I-73 during these six years. In addition, the Preliminary Engineering phase has increased \$2 million for the Roanoke County and Martinsville 3.6 miles sections – the only two segments that have ever been listed in the Six-Year Plan. The estimate has now grown to \$53,648,000 as unfunded and needed to complete just the PE phase.

**July 6, 2012** – President Obama signs the latest federal transportation bill, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21). MAP-21 authorizes \$118 billion in spending through the end of the Federal government's fiscal year 2014 which ends September 30, 2014. This is the first major new legislation for transportation funding since the 2005 bill ran out in September 2009 and was subsequently extended in nine short increments to take funding through June 30, 2012. MAP-21 didn't include any earmarks for particular projects, and \$500 million is set aside for "projects of national and regional importance" on a grant-only basis. Earmarks have been the funding for I-73 in the past.

**August 2012** – Price tag has grown from an estimated \$2 billion in 2000 to \$4 billion.

**December 21, 2012** - FHWA issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Henry County Alternative.

**February 2013** – Media reports state that the U.S. is short at least \$14 billion a year in federal funding just to maintain bridges and highways. With this deficit, states are not pursuing new projects, including priority status projects. In South Carolina, despite heavy lobbying from pro-road advocates, I-73 construction still lacks the necessary funding. Efforts to fund the first 42 miles of construction has not panned out during these hard fiscal times.

**May 13, 2013** - Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell signs new \$3.4 billion state transportation bill, HB 2313, into law.

**May 15, 2013** – VDOT releases DRAFT Six-Year Plan for Fiscal Years 2014-19. Despite state transportation funding increasing to \$15.4 billion with the passage of Governor McDonnell's transportation bill, the DRAFT Plan contains no future allocations for I-73 during these six years. I-73 cost estimates and allocations for Preliminary Engineering were not changed from the FY13-18 Six-Year Plan.

**July 2013** – Governor Bob McDonnell listed I-73 as a candidate for Public-Private Partnership.

**January 20, 2014** – House Bill 213 was tabled by Virginia General Assembly transportation subcommittee. It would have dedicated fifty percent of the Salem Highway District funds for the construction and maintenance of I-73. It also directed I-73 construction to begin in Henry County and to use the existing Route 58 bypass.

**February 21, 2014** – The Virginia General Assembly passed Senate Resolution 32 which established a joint committee to study the construction of I-73 in an attempt to expedite the project.

**April 6, 2014** – House Bill 2 (HB2) – was signed into law in April 6, 2014. HB2 requires the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) to develop and implement a quantifiable and transparent prioritization process – by July 2016 - for making funding decisions for capacity-enhancing projects within the six-year improvement program. The ultimate goal in the implementation of HB2 is to ensure the best use of limited transportation funds. This will be an annual process with highway project scores released to the public in mid-January.

**April 16, 2014** – VDOT releases DRAFT Six-Year Plan for Fiscal Years 2015-20. The DRAFT Plan contains no future allocations for I-73 during these six years.

**May 27, 2014** – The Virginia Office of Transportation Public-Private Partnerships recommended that I-73 be advanced to the detail-level screening phase of the Public-Private Transportation Act process.

**July 18, 2014** – VDOT Commissioner of Highways did not concur with the PPTA office recommendation that I-73 be advanced to the detail level of planning. This removed I-73 from Public-Private Partnership consideration.

**March 17, 2015** – Governor Terry McAuliffe signed SB 847 Interstate 73 Transportation Compact bill. This bill authorizes Virginia to enter a compact with other I-73 states to study, develop, and promote a plan for the design, construction, financing, and operation of the Interstate 73 corridor, including the use of tolls. Provisions of this act require the consent of Congress.

**June 17, 2015** – VDOT releases FINAL Six-Year Plan for Fiscal Years 2016-21. The Plan contains no future allocations for I-73 during these six years. Only \$10,988,000 has been previously allocated for the Preliminary Engineering of the Roanoke County and Martinsville sections. \$53,648,000 is still needed to complete the PE stage for these two sections.

**December 4, 2015** – President Obama signed the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act - a five-year, \$305 billion highway bill. FAST, a 1,300-page bill, is the first multiyear highway funding measure approved by Congress in a decade. It was approved on December 3 by the Senate in an 83-16 tally, hours after passing the House on a 359-65 vote.

**January 2016** – Virginia Senator William Stanley introduces SB 197 Interstate 73 Corridor Development Fund and Program in the Virginia General Assembly. SB 197 reallocates and transfers the U.S. Route 58 Corridor Development Fund and Program to Interstate 73 effective upon the completion of the construction of and payments, including debt service payments, for any and all parts of the U.S. Route 58 Corridor Development Program. Such completion shall be determined by the Commissioner of Highways. Currently, \$40 million is allocated annually to the Route 58 project. Based on current U.S. 58 debt, the provisions of this bill, if passed, will not go into effect until 2046.

**January 2016** – U.S. Congressman Robert Hurt (R-Virginia), Congresswoman Alma Adams (D-North Carolina), Congresswoman Barbara Comstock (R-Virginia), Congressman Bob Goodlatte (R-Virginia), Congressman Morgan Griffith (R-Virginia), and Congressman Tom Rice (R-South Carolina) introduced H. Res. 585 in the U.S. Congress. This resolution promotes a cooperative effort among states along the Interstate 73 corridor that would attempt to encourage the construction of I-73.

**February 2016** – Two resolutions to study the construction of I-73 were left in the Senate Rules Committee in the 2016 Session of the Virginia General Assembly. The Virginia General Assembly House subcommittee on Transportation voted to continue SB 197, reallocating U.S. 58 Corridor Development Fund to I-73 once U.S. 58 is debt free, to the 2017 Session. Virginia Senator William Stanley introduced an amendment (Item 453 #5s) to the Senate Budget Bill SB 30. This amendment directs VDOT to “complete a detailed alternatives analysis for the upgrade of Route 220 consistent with the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative (LEDPA) analysis requested by the US Army Corps of Engineers in March 2011 in its response to the Federal Highway Administration Record of Decision...” for Interstate 73.

**March 2016** – SB 30 was left in the House Appropriations committee. Amendment Item 453 #5s was not part of the Budget Bill compromise that passed in the Virginia General Assembly.

**March 8, 2016** – FHWA issues memo outlining procedures for states to repurpose unused federal earmarks for other projects as directed by the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016. This included an estimated \$14.8 million in I-73 money set aside for preliminary engineering and construction along the Roanoke to NC Line corridor.

**September 2016** – VDOT and CTB decide to repurpose all eligible I-73 earmarks (approx.. \$14.8 million) to be used on projects along the U.S. 220 corridor. This decision removes all money from the I-73 project. This will eventually remove the I-73 project from the FHWA Fiscal Management Information System (FMIS), which establishes project authorization, and the VDOT Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP). Despite removal from the FHWA FMIS and VDOT SYIP, this does not kill the I-73 project.

**June 2017** – I-73 is removed from the VDOT Six-Year Improvement Program (FY 2018-2023).

**March 2018** – Senate Bill 31 Interstate 73 Corridor Development Fund and Program died as it was left in the Virginia General Assembly House Appropriations Committee. SB 31 would have reallocated and transferred the U.S. Route 58 Corridor Development Fund and Program to Interstate 73 effective upon the completion of the construction of and payments, including debt service payments, for any and all parts of the U.S. Route 58 Corridor Development Program. Currently, \$40 million is allocated annually to the Route 58 project.

**February 2019** – Senate Bill 1014 Interstate 73 Corridor Development Fund and Program died as it was left in the Virginia General Assembly House Appropriations Committee for a second year. SB 1014 would have reallocated and transferred the U.S. Route 58 Corridor Development Fund and Program to Interstate 73 effective upon the completion of the construction of and payments, including debt service payments, for any and all parts of the U.S. Route 58 Corridor Development Program. Currently, \$40 million is allocated annually to the Route 58 project.



## Other States

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**Feb. 6, 2006** - South Carolina Governor signs bill allowing tolls to be collected on SC I-73 once constructed. The 90 miles in SC is estimated to cost \$2 billion.

**June 2006** - South Carolina releases DEIS for Southern Project of I-73.

**July 2007** - South Carolina releases DEIS for Northern Project of I-73.

**November 29, 2007** – FHWA approves FEIS for South Carolina Southern Project.

**February 8, 2008** – FHWA issues ROD for South Carolina Southern Project.

**August 6, 2008** - FHWA approves FEIS for South Carolina Northern Project.

**October 22, 2008** - FHWA issues ROD for South Carolina Northern Project.

**September 2009** – Final ROW plans completed for South Carolina Southern Project.

**November 2010** – South Carolina I-73 proponents express concern that the new federal transportation bill will contain no earmarks. They cite that “all of I-73’s funding has come from earmarks”.

**July 2011** – Final Design stage began for the South Carolina Southern Project. Construction Plans could be completed by April 2012 with construction beginning at the end of 2012.

**July 2011** – A Michigan Dept. of Transportation reaffirms their 2001 decision not to pursue I-73 in Michigan saying nothing has changed.

**April 2012** – SC Coastal Conservation League releases economic analysis report for SC I-73. This study done by Miley and Associates determined that 38/501, dubbed the Grand Strand Expressway, can be upgraded at 1/10 the cost of a new interstate while improving access and facilitating tourism in the Grand Strand

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**February 2015** – According to Myrtle Beach Online, "South Carolina ran out of money before it could put the first shovel in the ground" for I-73. The report also stated that "in December, South Carolina's Transportation Infrastructure Task Force reported that it would cost \$48.3 billion to bring the state's highways to "good" condition over the next 20 years – exceeding anticipated funding by \$23 billion." In January 2015, S.C. Governor Nikki Haley said she believes money should go to existing roads and not new projects. The media reported she specifically mentioned the \$2 billion proposed portion of Interstate 73 as something that can wait on funding.

**August 2016** – A study done on making I-73 a toll road in South Carolina found that I-73 would collect only \$5.2 million in tolls in the first year and \$32.7 million a year by 2050. At that rate it would take several decades to pay off the \$2 billion construction costs. The report also found that 22 percent of drivers would never use a toll road.

**February 2017** – The Ohio Department of Transportation reaffirms its non-commitment to I-73 in Ohio. I-73 advocates are trying to revive the proposal but ODOT says I-73 is not being discussed by transportation planners. An ODOT spokesperson responded that any federal money gained would best be used to repair existing infrastructure.

**May 2017** – I-73 in North Carolina between US 220 in Rockingham County now connects to Highway 68 near the Piedmont Triad International Airport after a new 6-mile section has been completed. An additional 3-mile section is expected to open during the summer of 2017.

**June 2017** – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has issued a permit allowing construction of Interstate 73 in South Carolina. Funding is still lacking for the estimated \$4 billion project.